

S/N 09/506,318

PATENTRemarks

Claims 13-36 are currently pending in this application. Claims 13 and 15 have been amended. No new matter has been inserted. Claim 13 has been amended by rearranging the limitations. Support for the amendments to claim 15 can be found in the specification at least in the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 26. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

35 U.S.C. § 112 - Indefiniteness

The office action rejected claims 13-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, as being indefinite. The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

While not conceding the correctness of the rejection, in the interest of advancing prosecution, the applicants have amended claims 13 and 15, rendering this rejection moot. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 102 – Ashida et al.

The office action rejected claims 13-16 and 20-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ashida et al. (USPN 6,200,706). The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Ashida discloses a nonwoven fabric for separators of non-aqueous electrolyte batteries. Ashida does not disclose a nonwoven fabric impregnated with a resin varnish as required by independent claim 13. Therefore, Ashida does not anticipate claim 13. As claims 14-16 and 20-24 are dependent on claim 13, they are also not anticipated. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

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PATENT35 U.S.C. § 102 – Kappeler et al.

The office action rejected claims 13, 15, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kappeler et al. (USPN 6,214,072). The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Kappeler discloses a filter with a filter bag formed of a filter medium comprising glass fibers, the fibers being fixed to one another at crossover points by a ceramic binder coating. Kappeler does not disclose impregnating a nonwoven fabric with a resin varnish as required by independent claim 13. Therefore, Kappeler does not anticipate claim 13. As claims 15 and 17 are dependent on claim 13, they are also not anticipated. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 103 – Ashida in view of EP 807703 and JP-11-128667

The office action rejected claims 13, 18, 19, and 25-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashida et al. (USPN 6,200,706) in view of EP 807703 and JP-11-128667. The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Ashida discloses a nonwoven fabric for separators of non-aqueous electrolyte batteries. Ashida does not disclose impregnating the nonwoven fabric with a resin varnish as required by independent claims 13 and 25. Further, Ashida does not suggest impregnating the nonwoven fabric with a resin varnish. This is because such a separator is wound around an electrode and therefore must have qualities of resiliency, flexibility and permeability to liquid and ions. A resin varnish would not allow for these qualities.

There is no motivation for one of skill in the art to combine EP 807703 with Ashida. EP 807703 discloses a nonwoven fabric cloth substrate with superior insulating properties that is useful for printed wiring boards and that is impregnated with a resin varnish. However EP 807703 is not properly combined with Ashida. Specifically, because the resin varnish of EP 807703 would render the separator of Ashida inoperative, one of skill in the art would have no reason to combine the elements of these two references. See MPEP § 2143.01.

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JP-11-128667 does not cure the deficiencies of Ashida. JP-11-128667 discloses a inorganic firing material that is fired on the skeleton of a polyurethane form or a resin net so as to improve the heat resistance of the structure. JP-11-128667 does not teach or suggest impregnating a nonwoven fabric with a resin varnish. Therefore, the combination of JP-11-128667 and Ashida does not teach or suggest the invention as claimed.

For at least these reasons, applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

With the above amendments and remarks, Applicants believe that the claims pending in this patent application are in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested. If any further questions arise, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the number listed below.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by current amendment, captioned "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made".

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENTVERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADEIn the Claims

Claims 13 and 15 have been amended as follows:

13. (Amended) A prepreg [of a short fiber nonwoven fabric] comprising: a short fiber nonwoven fabric comprising thermal-resistant synthetic fibers; an inorganic binder; and a resin varnish, wherein the prepreg is manufactured by bonding the synthetic [short] fibers with the [an] inorganic binder, and after the bonding [and further] impregnating the nonwoven fabric with the [a] resin varnish [and drying].

15. (Amended) The prepreg according to claim 13, wherein the thermal-resistant synthetic [short] fibers intersect each other forming intersections; wherein the thermal-resistant synthetic fibers are bound with the inorganic binder at the intersections.

